



HOUSING NEWS

★ KEEPING HOUSING ISSUES IN THE FOREFRONT ★

KS/MO HUD ANNUAL Y'All Come Conference June 22-23, 2006

For thirteen years, the HUD field office in Kansas City, Kansas, has been getting its Missouri and Kansas grant partners together and honoring their “best practices” at the Y’All Come Conference. In fact, according to Joe Remke, Acting Director of the Office of Community Planning and Development in the Kansas City office, HUD stole the idea from their office. HUD began its national Best Practices Program at some point well after the Y’All Come Conference had already been around for years, but discontinued it in 2001. The Kansas City field office continues the tradition of bringing together agencies from all over two states--this year in Joplin, Missouri.

What is a “best practice,” exactly, you may ask? It’s a term that gets tossed around a lot, but what does it really entail?

A HUD best practice is defined as a program or project, management tool, or technique that fulfills at least two of the following characteristics: 1) Generates a significant positive impact on those it is intended to serve or manage. 2) Can be replicated in other areas of the country, region, or local jurisdiction. 3) Demonstrates the effective use of partnerships among government agencies, non-profit organizations, or private businesses. 4) Displays creativity in addressing a problem, and demonstrates effective leveraging of resources.

(HUD)



I can think of about 47 agencies who deserve this award, but fortunately I’m not the one who has to decide.

HUD will honor five of its partners by nominating them to receive an award for the best Best Practice. This writer is not ashamed to reveal that he knows who at least one of these agencies so nominated will be. I probably shouldn’t reveal it outright, but here’s a clue: **M*ss*r D*p*rtm*nt *f M*nt*I H**lth**. Enjoy figuring that one out.

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The 2006 Y'All Come Conference is graciously hosted by the Economic Security Corporation of the Southwest Area (a.k.a ESC), which is the Community Action Agency for Jasper, Barton, Newton and McDonald Counties in southwest Missouri. Tammy Walker, Community Development Director for the agency, says that Y'All Come is well worth attending because it's a chance to talk to people and find out how they run the same kinds of programs you do. In addition to lively networking, food and awards, the conference will feature a tour of the historic City of Joplin (including a site used by Bonnie and Clyde as a hideout) and of Joplin building sites successfully rehabbed and re-used through HUD funds. The City Council members and local legislators have been invited, and the conference will exceed by Shannon Bruffet of KODE television news in Joplin. Carlson Gardner, Inc., a Springfield affordable housing developer, is the corporate sponsor of the event.

You can register for Y'All Come and find out more about it at ESC's [web site](#). See y'all there.



Continuum of Care Partners Profiled: Family Counseling Center, Inc.

This article is the first in a series profiling agencies that have worked with DMH Housing in the Continuum of Care process to develop supportive and permanent housing for people with disabilities.

Kennett-based Family Counseling Center, Inc. (FCC) has traveled a long road since its inception as a small outpatient drug and alcohol treatment facility in 1976. From its modest beginnings, FCC now



Family Counseling Center's main office in Kennett.

serves over 6000 clients annually in a sprawling 31 county area stretching from Maries County, in Jefferson City's neighborhood, to Pemiscot County at the bottom of the Bootheel--comprising roughly one-quarter of the state's area and 12% of its population. FCC provides services to families and individuals that include individual and group therapy, outpatient and inpatient services, case management, physician services, medication management, residential services, housing services, 24-hour crisis intervention, and prevention/education programs.

Family Counseling Center is a prime example of how much an agency can accomplish in the fight to end homelessness locally by working with its allies. Toward that end, in the last few years, FCC has been a continual partner with the Department of Mental Health in its capacity as the agency running the Balance of State Continuum of Care. In 2003, FCC applied for and received in 2004 Continuum of Care funds for a HUD Supportive Housing Program project to provide rental

assistance to people with disabilities experiencing homelessness in Dunklin, Pemiscot, and Butler Counties. In 2005, FCC applied once again for HUD COC funds, this time to create a Safe Haven permanent housing project that will serve Dunklin County.


At this writing, according to Shawn Sando, FCC's Chief Financial Officer, the Safe Haven project is undergoing its required environmental review and should break ground some time in June. The project will be built with eight units and will have a full-time staff of medical and case management professionals to handle the needs of residents. As is usual for HUD-funded Continuum of



Care housing projects, HUD funds comprise only a part of a complex financial picture that allows the execution of such projects. DMH Housing Team member [Edwin Cooper](#) worked extensively with FCC staff to put together several funding streams that also include Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and funds from the Federal Home Loan Bank.

Shawn Sando says that FCC will also be applying for HUD funds to create a Section 811 project, which is a supportive housing project for disabled persons.

The 811 project will be built adjacent to the Safe Haven project and will house up to ten people. In addition to all the bricks-and-mortar FCC plans to put together, it also operates a homeless services program funded by the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and by DMH funding. The services project, known as Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH), includes an outreach program, screening and diagnostic treatment, habilitation and rehabilitation, community mental health, alcohol and drug treatment, staff training, case management and referrals for primary health services, job training, educational services, and relevant housing services.

For more information about Family Counseling Center and its services, please visit their [web site](#). 


Super N.O.F.A. Fever!

Along with hay fever and spring fever, spring brings many of us a fever of activity as the Continuums of Care in Missouri all make their final preparations for submitting applications for HUD funding under the annual Notice of Funds Available.

As this is being written, the Review Committee for the Balance of State COC is meeting and ranking the 26 projects that were submitted for 2007 funding. Seven of these

are DMH Shelter Plus Care renewals; nine are renewals of existing Supportive Housing Projects (including the Homeless Missourians Information System); and ten are newly proposed projects (two transitional and eight permanent housing).

To illustrate the level of interest this year in pursuing HUD funding, the Balance of State Continuum has a pro rata share of \$2,613,394 (the total amount of COC funds it can receive), but the total amount of money requested is almost twice that: \$4,673,626. That figure does not include the \$734, 976 requested to fund renewals of DMH Shelter Plus Care grants.

Once applications are submitted across the state, *Housing News* will report on what projects were actually submitted to HUD, who got ranked #1 in their continuum, and how people are feeling about their chances. 



DMH Housing Team Web Site Gets More Than a Facelift

The DMH Housing Team web site, which can be accessed [here](#), got a complete make-over this month. If you're reading this newsletter, you probably

accessed it by visiting the Housing web site, and so you've probably seen some of our new features. We encourage you go explore the site thoroughly, however, because there are lots of new and important resources discussed there.

Missouri Department of Mental Health
Housing Team




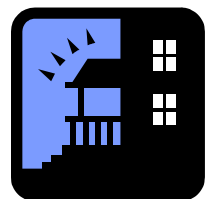
Recent site updates

- March 21, 2008: The [2008 Housing News](#) and related Continuums of Care included applications and updates.
- April 18, 2008: A new Missouri Housing News page is now online. Missouri Housing News is the only source of the "Official Missouri Housing News" and is the only source of the "Official Missouri Housing News" and is the only source of the "Official Missouri Housing News".
- May 2, 2008: The Housing web site was reorganized into individual job pages and new information added.
- May 2, 2008: The new [Housing News](#) is now online. It is the source of the "Official Missouri Housing News" and is the only source of the "Official Missouri Housing News".
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The mission of the Department of Mental Health Housing Team is to assist Missouri

Most noticeably, the site was changed from one enormous and unwieldy page of text to a more usable format of individual pages covering each of our existing topics. A few new graphical elements have added some visual interest (we hope!). And, as with *Housing News*, we're always interested in getting your suggestions for improvement and additional content.

If you have a suggestion for something you'd like to see featured at our web site, or would like to have your organization's web link added to our Housing Resources section, please write to us at housing@dmh.mo.gov. 



Housing Issues in the 2006 Missouri Legislative Session

Even though nothing extraordinary happened with regard to housing in the 2006 Legislative session, there were a number of actions that had an effect on housing issues in Missouri.

For example, efforts to increase the size of the Missouri Housing Trust Fund, which is administered by the [Missouri Housing Development Commission](#), once again failed ([Senate Bill 1196](#)). Bills to create a “Mobile Home Health and Safety Act” ([House Bill 1442](#)) and a Hot Weather Rule ([Senate Bill 955](#)), similar to the current Cold Weather Rule that prevents peoples’ utilities from being shut off in cold weather, also failed.

One positive development was the passage of [House Bill 1552](#) that allows homeless veterans to use the post office box address or a “voice mail address” of a charitable organization on an application for state or federal assistance. [Representative Michael Brown](#) of District 50, Kansas City, sponsored that bill.

Because housing is an issue that affects and is affected by so many different aspects of our civilization, it tends to come up in sometimes unexpected areas. One of the big issues this session was eminent domain —the ability of governmental entities to appropriate privately owned land for public use with just compensation to the owner of the property. [House Bill 1944](#), sponsored by [Representative Steve Hobbs](#) of District 21,


specifies that no Missouri entity capable of exercising eminent domain may do so solely for the purpose of economic development unless the property is “blighted.” The bill defines “economic development” to mean the use of a piece of property to provide an increase in tax revenue, tax base or employment for any political subdivision. The bill does *not* define “blight,” but does provide that “any legislative determination that an area is blighted, substandard, or unsanitary shall not be arbitrary or capricious or induced by fraud, collusion, or bad faith and shall be supported by substantial evidence. A condemning authority or the affected property owner may seek a determination as to whether these standards have been met by a court of competent jurisdiction...” (from the [text of HB1944](#)).

HB1944 passed and has been sent to the Governor for signature.



Basically, HB1944 is a good thing in that it prevents your city from taking over needed and inhabited private housing units. However, the failure to define “blight” is potentially worrisome because it still leaves the door open to subjective application

of eminent domain condemnations that could harm existing affordable housing. Clearly, one person’s idea of blight may be another person’s idea of affordable housing, and whether bad faith is involved in that thinking may be difficult for a court to determine. However, it’s also clear that cities and other political entities *do* need the ability to remove, at will, what is objectively blighted and replace it, one hopes, with housing that people of average or below-average means can afford. Even economic development in that situation is certainly preferable to abandoned and unused housing that no one should be living in.

It’s a developing situation, and one that supporters of affordable housing should watch in the future. 

Connecting to Help With Community Connection

Community Connection (at www.communityconnection.org), a project of the University of Missouri Extension, is an incredibly useful and powerful tool for locating a wide variety of resources in Missouri. Community Connection is useful for people in all kinds of roles and situations: people in need of various forms of assistance; people seeking ways to provide volunteer services or donate supplies or goods; people seeking meeting space; and of course for people simply seeking to reach out and connect with resources in their community, for whatever reason.

The site allows the user to search for a wide variety of services in either regions in and around Missouri, or in specific counties in Missouri and bordering states. The types of services include basic needs such as housing and food, consumer services, legal assistance, health and mental health care, education and environmental quality, among others.




One of the great things about Community Connection is the versatility of the search methods that can be used at the site. A simple search can be made in a single county for a broad classification such as “Basic Needs”, which leads you to a list of those basic needs services available, such as housing, food, material goods, and financial assistance. Clicking on any of those four categories leads you into a more detailed breakdown of those services. You can delve deeper into these lists through five levels of detail, until you’re satisfied as to the specificity of the categories listed. Then you just click on the “View 3 (or however many) Resources Found” link. This will take you to a list of the specific agencies providing the services you’re looking for, complete with web links and contact information.

An advanced search allows you to search for specific words or phrases to be found in the listings for individual resources. You can assign conditions such as limiting the search to agencies that have public meeting space, or agencies who HOUSING NEWS—5

serve uninsured people. You can search for resources within a specific distance of a specified zip code; for services provided within a specific network of providers (with over 150 networks listed so far); or for services provided in a specific language.

And finally, you can use the Google search engine to search Community Connection’s entire database of services and resources. The site gets over 360,000 visits and helps users view over 1.5 million web pages annually.

Visit [Community Connection](#) to suggest the addition of a resource or to have your own organization added. 



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Visit us on the web at:
www.dmh.mo.gov/ada/housing/housingindex.htm

